

GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF NORTH CAROLINA  
SESSION 2021

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HOUSE BILL 960

Short Title: Career Path Options Transparency Act. (Public)

Sponsors: Representatives Johnson, Winslow, Tyson, and Paré (Primary Sponsors).  
*For a complete list of sponsors, refer to the North Carolina General Assembly web site.*

Referred to: Appropriations, if favorable, Rules, Calendar, and Operations of the House

May 12, 2021

1 A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
2 AN ACT TO ENACT THE CAREER PATH OPTIONS TRANSPARENCY ACT.  
3 The General Assembly of North Carolina enacts:

4 **SECTION 1.** G.S. 116-209.16A reads as rewritten:

5 "**§ 116-209.16A. Information on career and major options.**

6 (a) Know Before You Go. – The Authority shall provide information on a ~~Web site,~~  
7 website, under a section entitled "Know Before You Go," to students and parents to assist in  
8 selection of major and career options as provided in this section. The information shall be updated  
9 annually.

10 (b) Career Options. – The Authority shall, as data is available, provide information on  
11 projected employment needs in the labor ~~economy~~-economy, including highest demand career  
12 areas, and associated salary ranges for those areas of employment, college majors which may  
13 fulfill those needs, and institutions of higher education that may provide those majors. The  
14 Authority may use existing sources of public information, such as the employment projections  
15 produced by the federal Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, to develop this  
16 information.

17 (c) Major Options. – The Authority shall, as data is available, provide information based  
18 on aggregate data for outcomes of public and private institutions of higher education and  
19 vocational and technical schools in North Carolina. Outcome information for each public and  
20 private institution of higher education and vocational and technical school shall include, but is  
21 not limited to, the following:

- 22 (1) Completion rates within the expected number of semesters for the degree  
23 sought.
- 24 (2) Transfer rates of students to other institutions.
- 25 (2a) Average tuition for public and private institutions of higher education and  
26 vocational and technical schools.
- 27 (3) Percentage of students receiving financial aid, by type of aid.
- 28 (4) Average and median amount of loan debt upon student graduation, by  
29 ~~major~~-major, and among graduates from four-year institutions of higher  
30 education, community colleges, and vocational and technical schools.
- 31 (4a) Average monthly student loan payment from four-year institutions of higher  
32 education, community colleges, and vocational and technical schools.
- 33 (5) Average and median salary, by ~~major~~-major, and among graduates from  
34 four-year institutions of higher education, community colleges, and vocational  
35 and technical schools.



- 1 (6) Percentage of graduates employed within six months of graduation, by  
2 ~~major~~major, and among graduates from four-year institutions of higher  
3 education, community colleges, and vocational and technical schools.  
4 (7) Percentage of graduates enrolled in graduate school within six months of  
5 graduation, by major.

6 (d) Public and Private Institutions of Higher Education. – For the purposes of this section,  
7 "public institutions of higher education" shall include the constituent institutions of The  
8 University of North Carolina and the community colleges under the jurisdiction of the State  
9 Board of Community Colleges and "private institutions of higher education" shall include  
10 postsecondary institutions that award postsecondary degrees, as defined in G.S. 116-15(a2)(1).  
11 A vocational and technical school shall mean a school licensed as a proprietary school under  
12 G.S. 115D-90."

13 **SECTION 2.** G.S. 115C-12 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

14 "(41a) To Compile Data for the "Know Before You Go" Program. – The State Board  
15 and the Department of Public Instruction shall collaborate with the  
16 Department of Commerce and the Department of Labor in collecting data for  
17 local boards of education to provide to sophomore students to enable them to  
18 make informed decisions about postsecondary education choices and their  
19 professional futures through the "Know Before You Go" programs under  
20 G.S. 115C-47(34b)."

21 **SECTION 3.** G.S. 115C-47 is amended by adding a new subdivision to read:

22 "(34b) To Provide Sophomores with "Know Before You Go" Information. – Each  
23 local board of education shall provide for a program for students in their  
24 sophomore year of high school with the information contained on the "Know  
25 Before You Go" website pursuant to G.S. 116-209.16A and the information  
26 compiled by the Department of Public Instruction under G.S. 115C-12(41a)  
27 to allow students to make informed decisions about postsecondary education  
28 choices and their professional futures."

29 **SECTION 4.** Through the longitudinal data system established pursuant to Chapter  
30 116E of the General Statutes, the Department of Commerce, the Department of Labor, and the  
31 Department of Public Instruction shall collect and compile data on an annual basis for the "Know  
32 Before You Go" website maintained by the State Education Assistance Authority pursuant to  
33 G.S. 116-209.16A and for the programs operated by local boards of education providing  
34 information to students under G.S. 115C-47(34b), including at least the following:

- 35 (1) The most in-demand jobs in the State, including starting salary and education  
36 level required for those jobs.  
37 (2) The breakdown of average cost for all public and private institutions of higher  
38 education and vocational and technical schools in the State, respectively. For  
39 the purposes of this section, "public institutions of higher education" shall  
40 include the constituent institutions of The University of North Carolina and  
41 the community colleges under the jurisdiction of the State Board of  
42 Community Colleges, "private institutions of higher education" shall include  
43 postsecondary institutions that award postsecondary degrees, as defined in  
44 G.S. 116-15(a2)(1), and "vocational and technical school" shall mean a school  
45 licensed as a proprietary school under G.S. 115D-90.  
46 (3) The average three-year student loan default rate for all public and private  
47 institutions of higher education and vocational and technical schools in the  
48 State.  
49 (4) The average total student loan debt for graduates of in-State students at public  
50 and private institutions of higher education for four-year degrees and graduate  
51 programs.

- 1 (5) The average graduation rate for all public and private institutions of higher  
2 education and vocational and technical schools in the State.
- 3 (6) The completion rates for apprenticeship programs, high school credential  
4 programs, career and technical education programs, and military first-term  
5 enlistments.
- 6 (7) The share of college graduates working in an occupation that does not require  
7 a college degree for each major.
- 8 (8) The average starting salary for individuals graduating from public and private  
9 institutions of higher education.
- 10 (9) The average starting salary for individuals that have completed an  
11 apprenticeship program, high school credential program, or career and  
12 technical education program.
- 13 (10) The average starting salary for individuals graduating from a vocational and  
14 technical school in the State.

15 **SECTION 5.(a)** Grant Program Established. – From the funds appropriated by  
16 subsection (b) of this section, the Department of Public Instruction shall establish the Career Path  
17 Options Grant Program for local boards of education to apply for funds to provide students with  
18 the information required under G.S. 115C-47(34b), as enacted by this act, to make informed  
19 decisions about postsecondary education choices and their professional futures. The Department  
20 shall establish application criteria for grants. Grant funds shall be used to promote and distribute  
21 program materials, including printing and distribution costs. Funds may also be used for hiring  
22 or paying supplemental compensation to career coaches or career development coordinators to  
23 support students through the program.

24 **SECTION 5.(b)** Appropriation. – There is appropriated from the General Fund to  
25 the Department of Public Instruction the sum of five hundred thousand dollars (\$500,000) for the  
26 2021-2022 fiscal year to implement the grant program established by this section.

27 **SECTION 6.** Sections 1 and 3 of this act become effective January 1, 2022. Section  
28 5 of this act becomes effective July 1, 2021. The remainder of this act is effective when it  
29 becomes law.